

Provider facts for Missourians with Special Health Needs

Individuals with special health needs and their families have unique requirements when identifying appropriate providers.

When choosing a provider consider the following:

Type of provider:

- Doctor, Primary Care Physician, Dentist, or Specialist
- Hospital, Clinic, Urgent Care Center, or Emergency Room
- Therapy, Durable Medical Equipment, Pharmacy, Vision, Hearing, or Home Health

Cultural Competence:

- Are you able to communicate with the provider?
- Does the provider understand your way of life?

Comfort Level:

- Are you at ease discussing health related questions with this provider?
- Can you trust the information you get from the provider?
- Do you understand the information from the provider?
- Are you comfortable with the provider's reputation?
- Do you hear good things about the provider from others?
- Is the office clean and the staff easy to work with and friendly?

Location:

- Is the provider well located, close to your home or on your bus route?

Accessibility:

- Is the provider open after regular business hours, on weekends, or do they have an urgent care center you can use after the office is closed?
- Does the facility meet your special visual and mobility needs?

Source of Payment:

- Does the provider accept payment from Medicaid, your private insurance, or HMO?
- If not, does the provider help you find other payment sources or offer a payment plan?

Qualifications:

- Is the provider licensed or certified?
- Is the provider's specialty the type of service you need?
- Is the provider experienced in working with individuals with special needs?

For more information regarding the selection of providers here are some helpful websites:

Helpful websites:

- Interviewing Prospective Providers: <http://health.yahoo.com/health/centers/parenting/00013855>
- Types of Health Care Providers: <http://health.yahoo.com/health/ency/adam/001933>
- Medline Plus-Directories: <http://nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/directories.html>
- HealthGrades-Information on Hospitals, Doctors & Nursing Homes: <http://healthgrades.com>
- Check Physician Credentials: <http://health.yahoo.com/search/all?p=physicians&su=&fr=>
- Determining a Doctor's Qualifications: <http://health.yahoo.com/ate/drgreene/allqa/00009962>
- Choosing a Primary Care Provider: <http://health.yahoo.com/centers/parenting/001939.html>
- Finding a Doctor for Your Child: <http://health.yahoo.com/news/37222>

To verify provider license and current disciplinary status contact the Missouri Division of Professional Registration at 800/735-2966 or 573/751-0293 or at <http://pr.mo.gov>

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